

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VIENTI 09191 210438Z

13

ACTION EA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1871

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 9191

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LA

SUBJECT: LAOS PARA SECTION II

REF: STATE 263916

1. WE APPRECIATED PROMPT STATEMENT OF U.S. POLICY TOWARDS LAOS. WE FOUND IT ON THE WHOLE CLEAR AND COMPLETE AND FULLY CONCUR WITH THE SUBSTANCE. HOWEVER, IN WORKING THROUGH THE PAPER WE ARE BEGINNING TO SURFACE CERTAIN DIFFICULTIES WITH THE POLICY'S FORMULATION AND OFFER THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

A. PARAGRAPHS 1 AND 3 ARE REDUNDANT. WE PREFER THE FORMULATION OF PARAGRAPH 3 BECAUSE IT CONTAINS THE THOUGHT OF PEACE AS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF THE LAOS WE SEEK TO PRESERVE.

B. IN PARAGRAPH 2 WE BELIEVE THAT SINCE THE PGNU HAS ALREADY BEEN FORMED, THIS PARAGRAPH COULD BE BETTER PHRASED AS FOLLOWS: "WE SUPPORT THE PGNU. . . ", STRIKING OUT THE PHRASE "THE FORMATION OF".

C. PARAGRAPH 4 IS NOT CLEAR. WHAT OTHER ARTICLES IN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 VIENTI 09191 210438Z

THE GENEVA AND VIENTIANE AGREEMENTS ARE WE SEEKING TO

FULFILL BESIDES THOSE CALLING FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS FROM LAOS AND THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE OF LAO TERRITORY FOR MILITARY PURPOSES? IF THERE ARE OTHER ARTICLES WE HAVE IN MIND, WE SHOULD CITE THEM ALSO SPECIFICALLY. IF AS WE ASSUME, HOWEVER, THE PRIMARY THRUST OF THIS PARAGRAPH IS NVA WITHDRAWAL, WE WOULD PROPOSE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE: "WE WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK THE WITHDRAWAL FROM LAOS OF ALL NORTH VIETNAMESE AND CHINESE TROOPS AND THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE OF LAO TERRITORY FOR MILITARY PURPOSES TO INTERFERE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF SOUTH VIETNAM, CAMBODIA AND THAILAND, AS PROVIDED IN THE GENEVA AND VIENTIANE AGREEMENTS."

D. IN PARAGRAPH 7 WE BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD MAKE EXPLICIT THE ISSUE OF PRINCIPLE BY SUBSTITUTING THE CLAUSE "IF THEY ARE PERMITTED THE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT BETWEEN THE ZONES" FOR THE WORD "WISH." WE BELIEVE THIS IS THE MAIN ISSUE AND WOULD RECOMMEND DROPPING THE LAST CLAUSE OF PARAGRAPH 7, "WHICH WOULD REDUCE THE BURDEN OF U.S. SUPPORT TO THE REFUGEES." WE DO INDEED WANT TO REDUCE U.S. AID LEVELS, BUT THIS IS NOT THE PARAMOUNT ASPECT OF THE REFUGEE-RESETTLEMENT ISSUE.

E. WE WOULD RECOMMEND PLACING PARAGRAPH 12 IMMEDIATELY AFTER PARAGRAPH 7 AND IN PARAGRAPH 12 CHANGING "PGNU EFFORTS" TO READ "VIENTIANE SIDE EFFORTS."

F. WE RECOMMEND REWRITING PARAGRAPH 8 AS FOLLOWS: "WE WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO LAOS FOR HUMANITARIAN PURPOSES, TO HELP STABILIZE THE ECONOMY, TO PREVENT ECONOMIC TROUBLE FROM UPSETTING THE POLITICAL COALITION AND TO MAKE LAOS MORE NEARLY SELF-SUPPORTING, SO THAT U.S. ASSISTANCE MAY BE PHASED DOWN AND EVENTUALLY TERMINATED." HUMANITARIAN PURPOSES ARE CLEARLY AN IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE OF OUR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. THE CONCEPT OF SELF-SUPPORT NECESSARILY INCLUDES THAT OF DEVELOPMENT BUT IT SEEMS TO US A CLEARER FORMULATION IN TERMS OF LAOS.

G. IN PARAGRAPH 9 WE RECOMMEND AFTER "OTHER DONORS" ADDING
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 VIENTI 09191 210438Z

("INCLUDING SOCIALIST COUNTRIES"). WE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT THAT WE SHOULD WELCOME AND NOT RESIST AID FROM SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. TO A DEGREE, A MULTIPLICITY OF DONORS REINFORCES THE NEUTRALITY OF THE COUNTRY PROVIDED LAOS DOES NOT BECOME OVERDEPENDENT ON SOCIALIST AID.

H. IN PARAGRAPH 11 "PGNU" SHOULD BE CHANGED TO "VIENTIANE SIDE" AND "FORCES ARMEES ROYALES" SHOULD BE CHANGED TO

"ROYAL LAO GOVERNMENT ARMED FORCES." THE TERM FAR AS
GENERALLY USED WITHIN THIS MISSION DOES NOT INCLUDE ALL
VIENTIANE SIDE FORCES.

2. AS A LAST PARAGRAPH WE SUGGEST A STATEMENT COVERING
SINO-SOVIET-US RELATIONS IN LAOS, ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:
"WE RECOGNIZE THAT PRESENT SINO-SOVIET ANTAGONISM SERVES
OUR PURPOSES IN LAOS BY MAKING OUR PRESENCE HERE ACCEPT-
ABLE TO TWO COMMUNIST POWERS AS A USEFUL COUNTERWEIGHT.
WE SHOULD SEEK TO DEAL WITH THEM AS EVEN-HANDEDLY AS
IS POSSIBLE IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THIS TRIANGULAR RELA-
TIONSHIP."
WHITEHOUSE

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